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October 14, 2003

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, MD  
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**SUBJECT: KING/DREW MEDICAL CENTER TRAINING PROGRAM  
ACCREDITATION**

As you know, last Friday, the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education's (ACGME) Resident Review Committee (RRC) for Surgery voted to confirm the summary withdrawal of the King/Drew Medical Center's General Surgery Training Program, effective June 30, 2004. This action by the ACGME follows the withdrawal last October of the accreditation of the Diagnostic Radiology Training Program.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) and County Counsel met on Friday with King/Drew Medical Center administrators and representatives of the Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science to discuss the implications of the action by the ACGME and the next steps that must be taken. There are a number of issues related to the accreditation withdrawal for both of these programs that are still under review, but I would like to update you on the actions taken thus far.

The two most critical challenges that face DHS are the placement of the current residents enrolled in both the surgery and radiology programs and the development and implementation of a program to provide clinical coverage in these areas to ensure the maintenance of the facility's trauma services and to meet the community's health needs.

#### Institutional Accreditation

On September 9, the ACGME conducted an Institutional Review of the overall training programs at King/Drew Medical Center. The Department expects to learn of the results of

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this review within the next two weeks. The results of this review are critical to any future efforts to reapply for accreditation of either the surgery or radiology programs. Specifically, the ACGME can issue findings in one of three categories – favorable, continued unfavorable, or withdrawal. If a favorable finding is issued, then reapplication for these programs is an option. If the finding is anything less than favorable, the ACGME rules prevent the institution from applying for any new residency training programs.

In the event the ACGME issues a favorable finding, I have secured a commitment from a leading expert in the field of surgical medical education to perform an independent review and assist the Department in restructuring the surgery department and program and to develop any application for accreditation.

#### Resident Placement

The memorandum of understanding that exists between the Department and the Joint Council of Interns and Residents (JCIR) requires DHS to make every reasonable effort to place any affected residents in a new training program. The extent of the actions taken by the facility and medical school with regard to identifying placements for the radiology residents was not satisfactory and the Chief Operating Officer has assigned a senior person to manage the communications with the residents in both programs and the activities associated with identifying potential placements, as well as to work with County Counsel to assess the associated legal issues. I want to ensure that the residents are kept fully informed as to the actions DHS can and is taking in this regard.

Additionally, the withdrawal of the accreditation of the surgery program may adversely impact the accreditation of other training programs at King/Drew Medical Center. There are a number of programs, such as anesthesiology, orthopedics and ophthalmology, which may require resident clinical experience in a surgery program. DHS and County Counsel are working with the ACGME to clarify the exact impact of the surgery program withdrawal on these other programs.

#### Provision of Clinical Services

In August, your Board approved a motion instructing the Department to develop a contingency plan to ensure the continued provision of surgical services upon the termination of the surgery training program, which, as noted above, has been set for June 30, 2004. At that time, I advised your Board that since the opportunity existed to request reconsideration of the ACGME's ruling, I would emphasize taking the necessary actions and gathering the appropriate documentation to support the request for reconsideration. During that time, staff has been working to develop plans to secure physician services to offset the radiology and surgery services presently being provided by residents. Staff also

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is completing an analysis of provider productivity and the service needs of the facility in order to develop a cost estimate and plan for ensuring coverage of necessary services.

#### Drew University Affiliation Agreement

Under the affiliation agreement, the loss of accreditation for two or more training programs by the medical school constitutes a breach of the agreement by the university and allows the County to immediately terminate the contract. The County also has the option to limit termination to the disaccredited training programs. The Department is working with County Counsel to evaluate what steps to take, particularly given the implications of the ACGME's actions on other training programs at the facility, as noted above.

Finally, the Department has asked the Auditor-Controller to conduct an audit of Drew University's expenditure of funds and distribution of faculty stipends under the affiliation agreement. The Department will be working with the Auditor-Controller to clarify the scope of this audit.

I will continue to keep you updated on the actions taken by the Department on this matter. Please let me know if you have any questions.

TLG:ak

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors

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